

Market-based Ideas and Designs for Today's Builders and Developers from **Feinberg & Associates** and Home Design Services



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MEETING TOSCANA'S TOUGHEST DESIGN CHALLENGES

F & A was asked to design upscale homes for M. Rieder's new community, Toscana, located in Howell, New Jersey. This project came with several design challenges. The entrance to the site is situated off of a busy highway behind a Home Depot store and adjacent to a trailer park. It has a high water table and a land plan that called for 200 units with zero-lot lines. We had our work cut out for us.

A Trip from Route 9 to Tuscany

Designing a community so that prospects make the mental leap from traveling a highway littered with shopping centers and office buildings to wandering the serene Tuscan landscape wouldn't be easy, but we were determined to make it work. We made sure that visitors had to go deep into the community and down a gentle valley, becoming completely engaged with Toscana's European charm before they reached the sales center. The impressive sales center gave the impression that they had arrived at a real Tuscan villa, complete with formal landscaping.

Downplaying the Zero-Lot Line

The presence of fairly large homes (between 2,600 and 3,500 square feet) on small lots posed another challenge. In order to draw attention away from the small lot, the homes were designed with unique elevations, unusual exterior materials, and a varied roofline, which delivered a high visual impact.

Designing Homes with a Custom Look

Howell has an active housing market, and Toscana would have plenty of competition. We would make this community stand out from the rest by including loads of custom home details.

Each home conveys sophistication and elegance. Many were designed with dramatic two-story foyers, sweeping curved staircases, and balcony overlooks. Some foyers feature inlaid mosaic flooring. We added custom home details like crown molding, columns, and built-in bookcases. Upstairs, expansive master suites have a separate sitting room and a dressing area.

But Where's the Basement?

Because Toscana is near the Jersey Shore, a high water table makes basements impractical. However, they are a standard feature in the region and many home buyers demand the extra space. We met this challenge straight on

by designing an attic flex space. The attic has a standard 8-foot ceiling that includes gabled windows and a stair entrance separate from the main staircase. Prospects were delighted. They were getting a "basement" on the third floor, and it had plenty of natural light!

Although Toscana started out with some design problems, our creative team was able to provide solutions that wowed the builder and his customers. Now it seems like Toscana is a lot closer to Tuscany than anyone thought possible.



President's Letter

It's Been 15 Years and We Owe it All to You

It's hard to believe that Feinberg & Associates is celebrating its 15th anniversary already. We started out as a small, local architecture firm and have matured to a full-service consulting firm that offers a complete range of design services.

Our staff has grown to over 40 professionals, making F&A one of the largest firms of its kind. In order to streamline our operations, Walter Borotto has eagerly taken the reins as our chief operating officer. His finger is on the pulse of every project, every step of the way. Bob Cogan has joined our custom homes division as the managing director. His home designs have won numerous awards and he brings a tremendous amount of experience to support John DiNisio, the division's creative director. In addition, our new account executive, Kelli Postma-Martin, comes from a national interior design firm and will be calling on you to introduce herself. She'll let you in on some of the excitement that Home Design Services has in store for 2004!



Planning Residential Neighborhoods on Corporate Land



footpaths peek out from the overgrowth. Streams and manmade lakes add to the beauty of the estate.

The property owners made the decision to sell the mansion's surrounding 500 acres of land, but also stipulated that the mansion and its immediate grounds should stay as they are for the time being. A national home builder snapped up the land and came to us for a plan that would integrate the character of the mansion and its remaining grounds with the luxury community they intended to build.

We immediately went to work on a solution. Within view of the mansion, we designed an enclave of upscale townhouses that shared the same architectural style as its 100-year-old neighbor. The outer neighborhoods consisting of 400-plus single-family homes would be designed with views of the scenic land features that already exist. Winding roads would take residents past the historic stone bridges and other original landscaping elements; these charming remnants of the Gilded Age would add to the appeal of the entire community. With this plan, the new and the old would embrace each other to complement the best each had to offer.

Although hard to come by, there are still some large parcels of land suitable for development in the region. If you are lucky enough to be able to acquire some of it, smart and innovative planning can ensure that the old and the new lead an amicable coexistence.

The home building industry has been feeling a land pinch in the Philadelphia-Southern New Jersey region and finding enough land to build new residential communities has become a major headache. However, a recent trend may provide some relief.

Corporations and other large entities have been cashing in on the high price of land by selling portions of their vast open campuses to developers. One of our recent projects is a prime example. A private, non-profit mental healthcare center situated on a 50-year-old campus in central New Jersey was operating in several buildings on the property. The foundation that oversees the center decided to sell a portion of the campus, while continuing to operate on a much smaller parcel of land.

Feinberg & Associates was asked to evaluate the healthcare center's remaining property and the surrounding area where new communities were to be developed. We created a plan for the healthcare center that would allow for future growth and continued use of the existing buildings. We also considered a master plan for the surrounding neighborhoods that would include a small village green. What we came up with was a land plan that kept the healthcare center out of the view of the neighborhoods, yet located in the very accessible village green area. This plan would allow the healthcare facility and the neighborhoods to amicably coexist for years to come.

Another interesting project faced a similar situation. A turn-of-the-century country estate in Chester County is the site of a large Tudor Revival mansion. The mansion is in use as both a private residence and a banquet facility, and is located on 500 acres of terraced gardens and woodland surroundings. Original statuary, stone bridges, and



COMMUNITY CENTER COMPLEX

Continued from page 1

F&A launched its first in-depth research program this year. We had phenomenal success with exploring the nexers in Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Raleigh, and Chicago. Now that the first year of our nexer study is coming to an end, we are eager to share the wealth of detailed information that we uncovered. F&A will take your residential designs to the next level with what we've learned, and we will be preparing customized presentations of our findings for F&A clients and other building industry groups. Reports on the results from each metro area are available now. Feel free to call us for copies at 609.238.9248.

F&A is proud of the progress we've made since opening our doors in 1988, and we owe it all to the great working relationships we have enjoyed with our clients. Here's to many more years working with the best builders and developers in the home building industry.

Bill Feinberg



COMMUNITY ENTRY FEATURE

CUSTOM HOMES A BOOMING BUSINESS



Since losing confidence in the value of the stock market, more and more people are putting their money into real estate. Feinberg & Associates is feverishly expanding its custom home division to meet this unprecedented demand.

We've beefed up our staff, most notably with Bob Cogan—a highly regarded residential architect who has designed homes throughout the East Coast. For the past 10 years, Bob operated his own architecture firm and worked closely with Bob Meyer Communities and other successful home builders. We're excited that Bob has joined the Feinberg team as the managing director of our custom home division. He is responsible for turning clients' loose ideas into solid plans.

Mary Jo Peterson, a nationally known kitchen and bath design consultant, has also agreed to lend us a hand. Mary Jo works with homeowners to understand what they really need and want so she can design their kitchen and

baths to be comfortable and convenient for a lifetime. We turn to Mary Jo when a \$100,000 kitchen needs to look—and work—like a million bucks.

When it comes to custom, where there's a will, there's a way. Some clients are buying empty lots and building homes from the ground up. Others are buying an older home on a large lot so they can tear it down to make room for a new luxury home. An increasing number are deciding to stay put and undertake substantial renovations to double the size of their existing home.

After settling on a location, custom home clients

turn their attention to details. They want unique ceilings and trims, high-end windows, and the best of everything in their kitchens and baths.

Expensive materials like granite and stone are in high demand. It seems like just when the Jones' have every luxury one could want, the Smith's order up something better and there's no end in sight!

This enormous activity in the market coupled with the tremendous word-of-mouth publicity we get from our clients is why our custom homes work has already doubled this year and shows no signs of slowing down.

We've expanded our market and F&A's custom designs are being built from southern New Jersey, all the way to Princeton, and even into eastern Pennsylvania.





Our interior design division— Home Design Services (HDS)— has enjoyed a great deal of growth over the past five years, and we're looking forward to continued success with our clientele as the expansion progresses.

In order to serve you better, we've hired account executive Kelli Postma-Martin. Kelli comes to us from a national interior merchandising firm and brings a fresh perspective to our efforts to expand. She is helping us groom HDS to meet the design standards held by national firms, as she builds relationships with our clients and provides a high level of personalized service. She is the single-point of contact between you and the rest of the Feinberg team.

Kelli's objective is to add value to your Feinberg proj-



ect with exciting models and effective sales centers. During the concept stage, Kelli can help you develop buyer profiles to share with our team of architects and interior designers. She has a thorough grasp of national interior merchandising trends and knows how to put them to work for you. Consider Kelli an extension of your in-house staff. She'll understand your prospects before you even break ground and will work to see that your



Auxiliary Kitchens Accommodate New Lifestyles



Mary Jo Peterson, CKD, CBD, CAP

Auxiliary kitchens are showing up in nontraditional places and the opportunities for creative use of space are bountiful. Examples of these kitchens

include juice bars, master suite or morning kitchens, and outdoor kitchens. Today's lifestyle trends and recent product innovations make these spaces work in new ways.

We all seem to be interested in kitchens that accommodate our lifestyle, whether the main event or these modified versions. Perhaps a reflection of our shortage of time or our desire to have our comforts easily



Photo courtesy of SieMatic

accessed, the mini-kitchen puts cold drinks in the exercise area, or a hot cup of morning coffee in the bedroom. Perhaps in response to our kitchens as social centers, we are adding kitchens outdoors to expand opportunities for shared time, or adding master suite kitchens to offer escape to private time. Whatever the incentive, these kitchens are a great opportunity to express our personality and add to the function of the space.

Beverage Centers

In keeping with growing attention to good health, there is growing interest in beverage centers. Whether off the exercise room, near the pool, in the family room, a bed-

room, a bathroom or the dining room, a juice bar will usually include shelf and cold storage for related snacks. The cold storage may take the form of a small refrigerator or beverage/wine chiller. With storage space and clean up provisions, a beverage center can be added in minimum space and in a range of budgets.

Beverage chillers housing wines, champagnes, waters, etc. are finding their way into formal dining rooms. These units, themselves with their clean lines, sleek glass doors, and soft interior lighting are easily built into cabinetry (as a serving buffet), designed to complement other furniture in the room.

Morning Kitchens

The concept of a more complete mini kitchen, or as some are referring to it, a "morning kitchen" is a natural addition to a master suite or a guest bedroom. These abbreviated kitchens usually include under-counter refrigeration, a compact microwave (or speed cooking oven), a coffee maker,

models remain highly marketable well beyond the grand opening celebration. "Our goal is to help builders sell homes," she says, "at the end of the day, that's all that matters."

Although Home Design Services has designed several properties that have won national awards, our true success is marked by how quickly our clients sell out. As we continue to expand, you can rely on us to consistently provide memorable interiors that make your target market say "I want this lifestyle!"

Kelli has worked in several fields involving real estate sales. She began her career as an account executive with New Homes Magazine, selling advertising to builders in the Greater Phoenix area. After earning a real estate license, she sold single-family and town home product for Pulte Homes in Delaware and New Jersey, then entered the interior merchandising field as an account executive responsible for East Coast sales. Kelli is active in sev-

eral home building associations on the national, state, and local levels.

Join us in welcoming Kelli Postma-Martin to the Feinberg team.



small sink, and clean up station built into cabinetry that compliments the space. A two-burner cooktop component may be an option based on the extent of use. This area may be tucked around a corner, in a space between the sleeping area and the bathing area, or built into a furniture piece. This area often fits into as little as 6' along a corridor.

The obvious luxury of having morning coffee, vitamins, and breakfast, or a late night snack close at hand is not the only reason for this concept. In homes where kitchens blend with great rooms and where master suites are generous in size and somewhat removed from the central living space, a morning kitchen completes the private sanctuary.

In the bedroom, issues of ventilation, sound, and safety are critical. Appliances must be chosen and located with attention to noise. Insulating walls surrounding the morning kitchen and selecting sound absorbing materials for floors, walls, win-

dows, and ceilings will help. Ventilation should be supplemented, again with thought to sound levels. Safety issues include consideration of timing devices or automatic shut-offs in heating appliances and timers on dishwashers.

Outdoor Kitchens



Photo courtesy of U-Line Corp

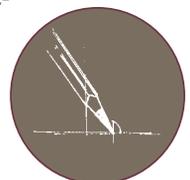
Climate permitting, the socializing that has become part of the indoor kitchen can be moved to the patio or around the boathouse or cabana. These kitchens typically include barbeques with side burners for additional cooking (including special wok attachments), rotisseries, ice makers, bever-

age chillers and everything including the kitchen sink. The sink, perhaps in concrete or stone, completes the picture and most parts of a meal can be prepared *al fresco*.

age chillers and everything including the kitchen sink. The sink, perhaps in concrete or stone, completes the picture and most parts of a meal can be prepared *al fresco*.

As with any trend, there are questions to be researched for the outdoor kitchen to run smoothly and safely. Does the space available provide shelter from the elements for the appliances and other products used? If so, does that shelter impede the ventilation of the grill? It is important to follow manufacturers specifications, and this may be a reason to enlist the services of a design professional.

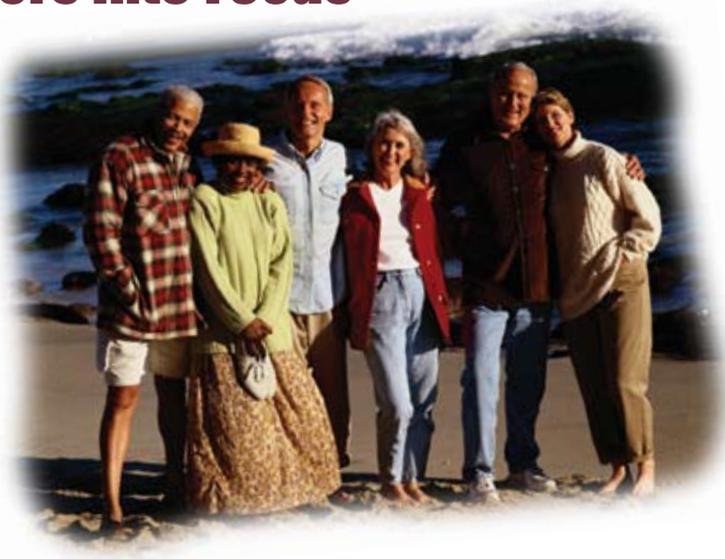
While auxiliary kitchens may at first seem a frivolous luxury, changes in our lifestyles and homes increase the value of these spaces to our well being and comfort. With thoughtful planning, secondary kitchens can add fun, function and personality to our homes.



Bringing Nexers into Focus

We've been studying the nexers (baby boomers between the ages of 45 and 58) for several months now and some exciting trends are beginning to emerge. We began the research in January with a few preconceived notions about this group, only to be pleasantly surprised by some of the breakthrough findings that were revealed.

One important observation was common among nexers in every market we studied. Nexers are interested in getting back to nature. They like to hike, fish, boat, and generally commune with the great outdoors. They want to live near trails, water, and natural beauty. Unlike previous generations, they do not show a great interest in clubhouse recreation or playing golf. The great outdoors is what turns them on, not being cooped up in a fitness room. As hard as it is to believe now, it is likely that communities of the future will not need to offer a clubhouse and a host of planned activities to attract the active adult market. The automobile industry has already uncovered



the nexers' preference for natural settings and has acted on it through its advertising. Have you noticed how many new car commercials are set in the mountains and forests?

Another common trend we uncovered is that nexers do not want to be segregated – age-restrictions are a definite turn-off. What they really want is a diverse and multigenerational community that has a small-town feel.

Nexers in Raleigh left us reeling. We were surprised to find that these nexers have no awareness of the active adult product or

over-55 communities, and therefore no preconceived notions that need to be overcome. This means that builders and developers in the Raleigh area have a unique opportunity to create an image that will be specifically relevant to this age group.

These are just a few of the many intriguing observations that have come out of our focus groups so far. We are so excited about what we've learned that we've been eagerly sharing this information with builders by making public presentations and writing articles for several national industry publications.

Even *BUILDER* magazine has taken notice and will be featuring an article on F&A's nexer research in January 2004.

Myril Axelrod, who plans and executes the research, has educated our entire staff on the nexers. Everyone at every level will be able to understand this group and apply what we've learned to your projects. She has agreed to provide an overview of regional findings to interested groups. If you would like to schedule a presentation on the nexers, contact our office at 609.238.9248.

**Feinberg is
Coming
Near You**

January 19, 2004, International Builders Show, Las Vegas, Nevada

Bill Feinberg will participate in an educational session entitled "Designing for Changing Lifestyles and Different Generations." Also look for John DiNisio on a panel called "Trends and Tools for Today's Kitchens." Additionally, John will review builders' plans during the AIA Plan Workshop.

March 18, 2004, Atlantic Builders Convention, Atlantic City, New Jersey

Bill Feinberg to speak on a panel entitled "From Their Lips to Your Ears: What Today's Senior Buyers Want, Need and Say They Can't Live Without."

March 25, 2004, Midwest Builders Show, Rosemont, Illinois

Bill Feinberg will give a presentation on "Using Multi-Family and Townhouses to Bridge the Generation Gap."

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